news-item captioned "oil fields open-for alien firms" appearing in the Times of India, Bombay, dated 12th July, 1991;

(b) if so, whether the World Bank is emphasizing the need for inviting foreign participation in oil exploration in view of the inability of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission to speed up the work;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to improve the ability of the ONGC in oil exploration?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) In order to supplement the efforts of ONGC and OIL Government has held three rounds of bidding for exploration in the past in which foreign companies had been invited to participate. Government has now approved the Fourth Round of bidding.

Parichha Thermal Power Plant

4626. SHRI VISHWANATH SHARMA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the time by which the remaining units of 220 megawatts are likely to be set up in the Parichha Thermal Power station of Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) the reasons for delay in setting up these units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) The proposal to set up 2 units of 210 MW each under Stage-II of the Parichha Thermal Power Station, Jhansi received from the Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board (UPSEB) in June, 1979, could not be considered for techno-economic clearance by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) as the essential inputs/clearances could not be tied up and was therefore returned to the UPSEB by CEA. No revised feasibility report in respect of the above proposal has been received in the CEA so far.

[Translation]

Stoppage of Express Trains at Bilpur (N. R.)

4627. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal regarding stoppage of express trains at Bilpur railway station on Northern Railway,

(b) if so, the names of the express trains proposed to be stopped at Bilpur railway station and when; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is no proposal at present to provide stoppage of any additional Mail/Express trains at this station.

(c) Not found commercially justified.